ONTARIO PARKS

St. Raphael

Management Plan
Issues and Options

Ontario

Nov. 23rd, 2005

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Ministry of Natural Resources is writing a management plan for St. Raphael Provincial Park. I am pleased to present the ***St. Raphael Provincial Park Management Issues and Options*** document for your review and comment. This document describes issues and options for the management of St. Raphael Provincial Park.

The park is part of a larger signature site area. Strategy development for the signature site is happening at the same time as management planning for St. Raphael Provincial Park. The strategy will provide direction for the final park management plan.

In recognition of the important natural and recreational values, the final park management plan may change the way existing tourism operators, recreationists, commercial resource harvesters and other user groups conduct their activities in the park. I encourage these users, and other interested individuals and groups to give us their advice and suggestions at this stage in the planning process.

Please take this opportunity to give your comments to the Ministry of Natural Resources:

St. Raphael Signature Site Project Team
49 Prince Street
Box 309
Sioux Lookout, ON
P8T 1A6

Email: siouxlookoutdropbox@mnr.gov.on.ca

When the public review of this document is complete, the project team will review the comments collected. After this review, a preliminary park management plan will be prepared for the park. The preliminary park management plan will be distributed for public review and comment. Based on the comments collected, the final park management plan for St. Raphael Provincial Park will then be prepared, approved, and distributed.

Yours truly,

A. Ireland-Smith

Adair Ireland-Smith
Managing Director
Ontario Parks-MNR

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1.0 Background

The *St. Raphael Signature Site Background Information Document* (January 2004) and the *St. Raphael Signature Site Issues and Options Document* (November 2004) provide more detailed information on St. Raphael Provincial Park and its values. The information in these two documents may help readers decide which of the management options to select.

1.1. Overview

St. Raphael Provincial Park (P2287) was identified in 1999 as part of *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*. The park was regulated in May 2003 as a waterway class provincial park covering an area of 90,516 ha.

St. Raphael Provincial Park is located 150 km northeast of Sioux Lookout and 430 km northwest of Thunder Bay. A part of the eastern boundary of the park lies alongside Highway 599 between the Town of Pickle Lake and the community of Savant Lake. The northern boundary of the park touches Lake St. Joseph. The park overlaps areas traditionally used by two Aboriginal communities: Mishkeegogamang First Nation and Ojibway Nation of Saugeen.

Many lakes and rivers in the park link as a result of two geological faults in the area. These lakes and rivers provide over 2,000 km of shoreline and 30,000 ha of water, creating an area perfect for recreational activities. The importance of the park as a waterway meeting place has long been known by Aboriginal peoples. As a result, a visitor may find remnants of portages and cultural areas in the park.

St. Raphael Provincial Park provides important economic and recreation benefits to local communities and the Province of Ontario. The park's natural and cultural values will be protected so that visitors continue to have high-quality outdoor experiences. Park policies will support tourism in the region, while making sure that protection of the park values remains a priority.

1.2. Aboriginal Communities

St. Raphael Provincial Park is in the area of the Nishbnawbe-Aski Nation (Treaty #9). The park area is also shared with Treaty #3 people.

The land and environmental health have always been very important to Aboriginal people. The land influences religious beliefs and livelihood, which includes food, shelter, clothing and transportation. There is still a strong tie between the land, livelihood and community.

Use of the park by Aboriginal peoples is allowed to continue subject to public safety and other considerations.

The park may also provide opportunities for economic development for Aboriginal peoples. This may include new tourism ventures or partnerships to operate or maintain parts of the park.

1.3. Signature Site Planning

The planning process for St. Raphael Signature Site is complex. The signature site includes St. Raphael Provincial Park and Miniss Enhanced Management Area (EMA). The EMA is made up of three separate sections. Two of these EMA sections are fully surrounded by the park (see Figure 1 on page 21).

The Miniss EMA was created so that forest management activities could take place but with special consideration to minimizing the impact of access roads. A strategy for St. Raphael Signature Site is currently being prepared. This strategy will provide direction to the park management plan and a resource management plan for the Miniss EMA.

The vision for the signature site is:

'To preserve and protect the remote characteristics and unique values of the St. Raphael Signature Site, while maintaining and balancing traditional, economic and recreational activities and opportunities.'

1.4. Parks Planning

Purpose of a Park Management Plan

Management plans show how individual parks will help achieve the objectives of the parks system. Management plans for individual parks are written to show how the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) will protect, manage, operate and develop those parks.

A management plan is assessed every 10 years to determine the need for a plan review to make sure that the existing information and direction is correct. The plan may be amended when required. This provides the flexibility to make changes when new conditions affect the park and to evaluate new development proposals.

An Interim Management Statement (IMS) guides the use of a park until an approved park management plan is completed. An IMS was written and approved for St.Raphael Provincial Park in 2001.

Park Policy

Today provincial parks are governed by four main tools:

1. Ontario Provincial Parks Act,
2. *Ontario Provincial Parks Policy Statement*,
3. *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* (1992), and,
4. *Ontario's Living Legacy: Land Use Strategy* (1999).

Park Goals and Objectives

The **goal** of the Ontario Parks system is:

> *To provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and to protect provincially significant natural, cultural and recreational environments in a system of Provincial Parks.*

There are also four **objectives**:

- ***Protection***: To protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario.
- ***Recreation***: To provide outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high-intensity day-use to low-intensity wilderness experiences.
- ***Heritage Appreciation***: To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario.
- ***Tourism***: To provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the province.

Park Classification

The provincial parks system has six classes (i.e., types) of parks. Each class of park contributes in a different way towards the four parks objectives. **St. Raphael is a waterway class park**. Together all of the park classes make sure that the province's natural, cultural and recreational environments are protected.

Park Zoning

Park classification determines what types of zones a park may have. Zoning is an important part of a park management plan and as a part of the plan **every area of the park has to be assigned to a zone type**.

Zones help to do the following:

1. recognize and protect values/features, as well as, facilities and services and,
2. guide policy decisions, and planning and management of the values/features.

The types of resource management and recreation activities that can be considered in a park depends on the zones that are assigned. The zoning is based on the significance of resources and the ability of these resources to support different activities.

There are six types of zones within the provincial parks system. As a waterway class park, St. Raphael can have all six zone types.

The descriptions of the six zones are as follows (see also Table 1 on page 19):

Natural Environment (NE) zones include natural landscapes which permit the minimum level of development required to support low-intensity recreational activities. Development is generally limited to back-country campsites, portages, necessary signs and minimal interpretive facilities.

Nature Reserve (NR) zones protect the significant earth and/or life science resources within a park, and may include a protective buffer area in which a minimum of development is permitted. Development is generally restricted to trails, necessary signs, interpretive facilities (where warranted) and temporary facilities for research and management. Very strict management applies in these areas to protect the sensitive and significant features.

Historical (H)zones encompass the provincially significant cultural resources of a park. They generally focus on a specific site and that site's relationship to the surrounding landscape, so they may include a protective buffer around the main feature in the zone. Development is limited to trails, necessary signs, interpretive, educational, research and management facilities, and historical restorations or reconstruction where appropriate.

Wilderness (W) zones include wilderness landscapes of appropriate size and integrity to protect natural and cultural values, and to support extensive types of back-country recreation, such as canoeing or hiking. Development is limited to wilderness campsites, portages, trails and signs necessary for route identification. Wilderness campsites are either canoe-in or hike-in; established at a very low density; and offer primitive levels of facility development, in keeping with the character of the landscape which the zone protects.

Development (D) zones contain the area(s) of the park geared towards the support of intensive day-use and car camping activities. They constitute a relatively small portion of most parks. Development may include roads, visitor control structures, beaches, picnic areas, car campgrounds, commercial service facilities, and orientation, interpretive, educational, research and management facilities.

Access (A) zones are areas which support the use of, and access into or across the park. Generally development is limited to roads, visitor control structures and group campgrounds. Provisions may be made for limited orientation, interpretive or educational facilities, though generally more for self-use rather than through structures personal service. Limited facilities for research and park management may also be present.

2.0 Preliminary Signature Site Strategy Direction

In Section 1.2 (page 2), it was discussed that St. Raphael Provincial Park is a part of the larger St. Raphael Signature Site. Because of the linkage between the park and the signature site several issues associated with the park were discussed in the *St. Raphael Signature Site Issues and Options Document (November 2004).*

From November 26th, 2004 to January 10th, 2005 the public had an opportunity to review the *St. Raphael Signature Site Strategy Issues and Options*. The public provided valuable comments. This information has been used to develop direction for the Preliminary Signature Site Strategy. These comments will also be considered in the development of the direction in the *St. Raphael Preliminary Park Management Plan.*

This *St. Raphael Provincial Park Management Issues and Options Document* provides another opportunity to seek input, confirm issues and discuss possible solutions on park topics. The remaining issues are outlined in Section 3.0. This document should be reviewed in conjunction with the *St. Raphael Preliminary Signature Site Strategy.*

To help make decisions and understand the issues associated with the park, this section (2.0) outlines some of the direction proposed in the *St. Raphael Preliminary Signature Site Strategy:*

Aboriginal Values: Uses of the park by Aboriginal peoples are allowed to continue subject to public safety and other considerations. The ministry will work with Aboriginal people to identify economic opportunities and document important cultural sites. Opportunities for local Aboriginal communities will be a priority in future development in the park.

Cultural Heritage: All confirmed cultural heritage resources and sites of high cultural resource potential will be protected. Specific locations of sensitive cultural sites will not be made public.

Earth Science: Significant and sensitive earth science features will be protected within the park.

Education: Information on cultural, natural and recreational values will be included in educational material. Information may be provided at access points, shorelunch sites, camping areas and/or trails, and in brochures or other materials developed. Partnerships (e.g., with tourism operators) will be a key part of this initiative.

Energy: Commercial power generation is not permitted in St. Raphael Provincial Park. Ontario Parks may consider the use of renewable energy systems for supplying the park's energy needs (i.e., facilities related to operating the park), where it proves more economical and environmentally feasible than other forms of generated electricity.

Construction of utility corridors is discouraged, but will be permitted if no reasonable alternatives exist.

Fire: The park management plan will provide direction on fire response in the park. Prescribed fire in the park will be considered.

Fisheries: The ministry will undertake a fisheries scoping exercise to determine the appropriate measures to support fisheries management. This exercise may lead to the development of a fisheries management plan or a fisheries stewardship plan for the signature site. The allocation of the fisheries will consider Aboriginal subsistence needs. Capacity will then be provided to resident anglers, and then to tourism operations. No further fisheries allocations for tourism purposes will be available until fisheries capacity is confirmed. Tourism operators will be encouraged to support fisheries management projects through cost and resource sharing partnerships.

During park management planning, consideration will be given to phasing-out the use of live bait, allowing only the use of preserved bait, or allowing only bait harvested in the signature site to be used on lakes within the park.

Forestry/Mining Activities near the park: The planning of activities in the adjacent general use area should consider the implications of these activities on the ecological, recreation, tourism and other values in the signature site, and mitigate

impacts where ever feasible. This will be done through existing planning and approval processes.

Forestry in the enhanced management area should be carried out while preserving and protecting the remote characteristics and unique values. The number of areas under active operation at any one time will be minimized. The planning of forestry operations will consider timing windows, slash pile management, revegetation requirements for gravel pits and push-outs, and noise and visual affects. Alternative forest renewal methods will be examined, particularly adjacent to the provincial park boundary. The forestry activities in the enhanced management area will be planned through the enhanced management area resource management and forest management planning processes.

Mineral exploration and mining in the enhanced management area should be carried out in a manner that considers signature site values, subject to the Mining Act.

Recreation: The park will provide recreational experiences which respect ecological, cultural and wilderness values. Canoe routes which are safe and support the vision for the signature site can continue to be used. Partnerships will be sought with tourism operators, outdoor recreation groups and local Aboriginal communities, to monitor use and maintain basic facilities and portages. Enhancement or development of new recreational facilities may be considered. Proposals by local Aboriginal communities will be given priority.

To provide public access and entry to the signature site, two formal public (land) entry points will be permitted to promote continuation of back-country recreational activities in a remote setting. A front-country recreation area and public entry point may be permitted at Minchin Lake adjacent to Highway 599 (see page 14). A second public entry point will be permitted to accommodate travelers approaching the signature site from roads to the southwest of the area. This access point could include parking and privies. To maintain the remote character of the signature site and its waterways, this second point will be located outside the signature site. Visitors using this access point would enter the signature site using non-mechanized means via a water route or trail. The use of other traditional water-based access points will be permitted to continue.

Roads for Motorized Use: New roads in the signature site will be permitted for industry and park purposes where necessary. Access roads for other commercial users (e.g., prospectors, fur harvesters, bait resource harvesters, tourism operators) and for private use will not be considered. Motorized use of roads will be permitted by authorized users only (e.g., to gain access to active forest harvest or renewal areas), and to perform road maintenance and deactivation. Motor vehicle use of roads by the public, prospectors or other resource users will not be authorized. Enforcement and monitoring of road use restrictions will be a priority.

Industry roads into the Miniss Enhanced Management Area through the park will only be permitted via three main access corridors. Only one road crossing of the park from the general use area will be active at any one time, with some rare exceptions.

Roads for advanced mineral exploration, development and/or production are permitted in the Miniss Enhanced Management Area. Generally, roads across parks to access mining claims or leases outside of the park are not permitted. St. Raphael Signature Site has a unique configuration in that the EMA is almost entirely surrounded by the park. Access for the purposes of mineral exploration or mining in the portions of the EMA that are surrounded by the park, will be permitted through the park on existing forest access roads or approved access corridors, and must comply with road standards developed in the park and resource management plans.

Roads in the signature site will be kept to a minimum number and density. They will be developed to a minimum standard in keeping with approved engineering practices. Roads will be selectively deactivated and/or rehabilitated following the completion of resource management activities. Design and construction of roads will facilitate effective access controls, road closures and rehabilitation, and must consider signature site values. Prescriptions for the roads in the park will be developed in the park management plan.

Tourism: Authorized tourism operations will be permitted to continue, as long as there is resource capacity to support these activities and the quality of signature site values is maintained. Facility expansion, upgrades or improvements must be designed to blend with the natural landscape, and must incorporate environmentally sensitive construction techniques and materials to the maximum extent possible. Reporting obligations for tourism operations will be examined. Roads will not be available for motorized use by tourism operators or their guests.

There may be potential for new tourism activities in the signature site; particularly for non-consumptive, ecotourism type activities such as guided back-country canoeing, and nature interpretation. Proposals for new operations must be supported by detailed resource information, and be included in a sound business plan which demonstrates direct and sustainable benefits to local communities, and provides a fair return to the Crown.

Trails for Motorized Use: The use of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles will only be permitted on trails authorized for motorized use. Trails that have traditionally been used for commercial fur harvesting, bait harvesting operations and bear hunting services will become authorized unless park values are threatened. Trail information will be collected from users to support access management planning in the signature site. Trails which are not authorized will be closed and will require access controls and some rehabilitation. New trails will be considered for non-motorized use but not for motorized use. A list has been developed which details information that will be required in a proposal for a new trail, or trail relocation application, in or adjacent to the signature site.

Vegetation Management: Rare and significant species and communities will be protected in the park. Efforts will be made to incorporate Aboriginal knowledge of vegetation into planning. Measures to control the spread and introduction of non-native species will be explored in the park management plan.

Water Quality: Aquatic ecosystem health in the signature site area will be maintained through careful planning of activities adjacent to streams, lakes and recharge areas. Potential pollution sites will be monitored.

Wildlife: The intent with respect to wildlife is to help ensure healthy wildlife populations and support protection of species at risk by sustainable management of resource and land uses in the signature site. Traditional Aboriginal knowledge of wildlife use will be important in park management planning. Species at risk habitat will be considered in the park through appropriate zoning and policies.

3.0 Issues and Options

Issues related to the management of St. Raphael Provincial Park have been identified by interest groups, individuals, and the Ministry of Natural Resources staff. The ministry has deve loped options to address these issues.

Options to address park management issues are outlined in Sections 3.1 to 3.5. There are six primary issues:

1. protection of park values (pages 8-14)
2. motorboat use (page 15)
3. snowmobile and ATV use (page 16)
4. commercial tourism activities (page 17)
5. park name (page 18)

Option As are presented on Figure 1 and Option Bs are presented on Figure 2.

In the enclosed Response Booklet you should select your preferred options and provide comments. You are also encouraged to identify new issues or options.

Use of the park by Aboriginal peoples is allowed to continue subject to public safety and other considerations. The protection of all known and identified Aboriginal ceremonial, spiritual, educational, and medicinal plant sites is also important. These known values are considered in the options presented below but because of their sensitivity the location of some sites may not be disclosed.

3.1. Issue 1: Protection of Values

Listed below are options that are being considered for management of some of the park values. You should look at the **zone descriptions - Pages 2 and 3** and **Table 1 on page 19** for more information on permitted activities and facilities for each zone type. Some significant park values such as the Medcalf Lake Wetland Complex, the landform features on the south shore of Medcalf Lake, the Churchill Black Ash Stand, and the De Lesseps River Seepage Fen are not mentioned here because there are no options for their protection (i.e., they will be protected). The zoning of these features will be outlined in the preliminary park management plan

How can we best protect the following park values?

Churchill/St. Raphael Caribou Islands

These islands are spring/summer calving and nursing grounds for woodland caribou. This species is considered to be threatened nationally and provincially. Caribou are very sensitive to disturbance during calving and nursing season (May 1st to July 31st). The disruption of cow-calf pairs during this time may be detrimental to calf survival There are several campsites in this zone. There are also two tourism outpost camps adjacent to this zone on the shores of St. Raphael and Churchill Lakes. A canoe route passes through the area.

OPTION A : Nature Reserve Zone (NR1)	**OPTION B : Natural Environment Zone (NE)**
Figure 1	**Figure 2**
Size: 1220 ha	**Size: 1220 ha**
• These islands will be designated in a **nature reserve zone.** • Permitted activities **may include**: shorelunches (Aug. 1st – Apr. 30th). • Permitted new development **may include:** necessary signage. • The water next to this area is proposed as a natural environment zone (NE).	• These islands will be designated in a **natural environment zone.** • Permitted activities may include: **shorelunches, hunting (not for caribou), fishing from shore, camping,** and **recreational snowmobile travel on authorized existing trails.** • **Seasonal restrictions** (May 1st-July 31st) may be implemented during caribou calving/nursing for **some areas and activities.** • Permitted new development **may include:** necessary signage, **rustic campsites** and **shorelunch sites.** • The water next to this area is proposed as a natural environment zone (NE).

Notes:
The primary difference between these two options is the level of activity and the possible new development permitted. For example the natural environment zone has fewer restrictions on activities such as shorelunches, fishing and camping, and the possible primitive facility development associated with these activities. The natural environment zone also allows for hunting. Hunting for caribou is not permitted. There are other differences between zone types. These are shown in **Table 1 on page 19.**

Hooker Lake Red Pines and Caribou Areas

The red pines in this area are significant because they are at the northern extent of their range. They are also among the few old growth red pine stands known in Ecoregion 3S. Red pines depend on fire to open their cones and release their seeds. Lack of recent fires has limited natural red pine regeneration in the park. The use of prescribed fire or modified fire suppression for this area will be considered in the park management plan. This area also provides spring/summer calving and nursing grounds for woodland caribou. This species is considered to be threatened nationally and provincially. Caribou are very sensitive to disturbance during calving and nursing season (May 1st to July 31st). The disruption of cow-calf pairs during this time may be detrimental to calf survival There is currently a mainbase tourism lodge nearby on the shore of Hooker Lake. A canoe route passes through the area.

OPTION A : Nature Reserve Zone (NR2)	**OPTION B: Natural Environment Zone (NE)**
Figure 1	**Figure 2**
Size: 139 ha	**Size: 139 ha**
• These islands will be designated a **nature reserve zone.** • Permitted activities may include: shorelunches (Aug. 1st – Apr. 30th). • Permitted new development **may include:** necessary signage. • The water next to this area is proposed as a natural environment zone (NE).	• This site will be designated a **natural environment zone.** • Permitted activities may include: **shorelunches, hunting (not for caribou), fishing from shore, camping,** and **recreational snowmobile travel on authorized existing trails.** • **Seasonal restrictions** (May 1st-July 31st) may be implemented during caribou calving/nursing for **some areas and activities.** • Permitted new development **may include:** necessary signage, **rustic campsites**, and **shorelunch sites.** • The water next to this area is proposed as a natural environment zone (NE).
Notes: The primary difference between these two options is the level of activity and the possible new development permitted. For example the natural environment zone has fewer restrictions on activities such as shorelunches, fishing and camping, and the possible primitive facility development associated with these activities. The natural environment zone also allows for hunting. Hunting for caribou is not permitted There are other differences between zone types. These are shown in **Table 1 on page 19.**	

De Lesseps Lake Caribou Islands

These islands are spring/summer calving and nursing grounds for woodland caribou. This species is considered to be threatened nationally and provincially. Caribou are very sensitive to disturbance during calving and nursing season (May 1st to July 31st). The disruption of cow-calf pairs during this time may be detrimental to calf survival

This area has also been identified as having good winter caribou habitat. There are a few campsites in the northern part of this area. There ia also a mainbase lodge and a trap cabin on the outer shores of De Lesseps Lake. A canoe route passes through this zone.

OPTION A: Nature Reserve Zone (NR3)	**OPTION B: Natural Environment Zone (NE)**
Figure 1	**Figure 2**
Size: 398 ha	**Size: 398 ha**
• These islands will be designated a **nature reserve zone.** • Permitted activities **may include**: shorelunches (Aug. 1st – Apr. 30th). • Permitted new development **may include:** necessary signage. • The water next to this area is proposed as a natural environment zone (NE).	• These islands will be designated a **natural environment zone.** • Permitted activities may include: **shorelunches, hunting (not for caribou), fishing from shore, camping,** and **recreational snowmobile travel on authorized existing trails.** • **Seasonal restrictions** (May 1st-July 31st) may be implemented during caribou calving/nursing for **some areas and activities.** • Permitted new development **may include** : necessary signage, **rustic campsites** and **shorelunch sites.** • The water next to this area is proposed as a natural environment zone (NE).

Notes:
The primary difference between these two options is the level of activity and the possible new development permitted. For example the natural environment zone has fewer restrictions on activities such as shorelunches, fishing and camping, and the possible primitive facility development associated with these activities. The natural environment zone also allows for hunting. Hunting for caribou is not permitted. There are other differences between zone types. These are shown in **Table 1 on page 19.**

Miniss Lake Caribou Areas

The islands in Miniss Lake are spring/summer calving and nursing grounds for woodland caribou. This species is considered to be threatened nationally and provincially. Caribou are very sensitive to disturbance during calving and nursing season (May 1st to July 31st). The disruption of cow-calf pairs during this time may be detrimental to calf survival. The islands and shore in the southern and western portions of the lake have also been identified as having good winter caribou habitat. There is one trap cabin on an island in this area. In addition, there are three tourism outpost camps and two campsites on the outer shore of Miniss Lake, and a canoe route passes through this area. This site is large enough to be considered for a wilderness zone.

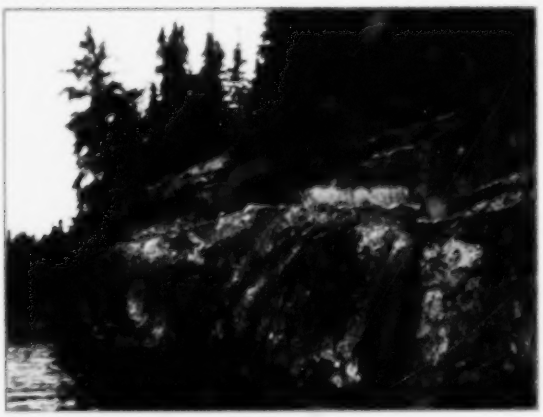
OPTION A: Nature Reserve Zone (NR4)	**OPTION B: Wilderness Zone (W1)**
Figure 1	**Figure 2**
Size: 3295 ha	**Size: 16,820 ha**
• The islands in Miniss Lake will be designated a **nature reserve zone.** • Permitted activities **may include**: shorelunches (Aug. 1st – Apr. 30th). • Permitted new development **may include:** necessary signage. • The water next to this area is proposed as a natural environment zone (NE). In this water zone commercial aircraft landings would be permitted. Motorboat use may be restricted (see Section 3.2).	• The islands, **the water and the surrounding shoreline** of Miniss Lake will be designated a **wilderness zone**. • Permitted activities **may include**: **shorelunches, hunting (not for caribou), fishing from shore, camping** and **hiking.** • **Seasonal restrictions** (May 1st-July 31st) may be implemented during caribou calving/nursing for **selected areas and activities.** • **Motorboat and aircraft use will be permitted only through the three existing commercial tourism outpost camps on Miniss Lake.** • Permitted new development **may include:** necessary signage, **rustic campsites and shorelunch sites.**

Notes:
The primary differences between these two options are: (1) the level of activity and development permitted and (2) the size of the zone. In the wilderness zone there would be fewer restrictions on shorelunches, fishing and camping, and the associated primitive facility development for these activities. The wilderness zone would also allow for hunting but no recreational motorized travel. Hunting for caribou is not permitted. The wilderness zone includes the water, the islands and the surrounding shoreline but the nature reserve zone only includes the islands. There are other differences between zone types. These are shown in **Table 1 on page 19.**

Miniss River/Yam Lake Pictographs

In this area there is a narrow water channel with cliffs on both sides of the water. Several pictographs have been identified here. These pictographs may be sensitive to disturbance from increased activity or facility development in the area. A cultural inventory has not been completed to determine if other pictographs or cultural heritage features exist in the nearby areas. A canoe route passes through here.

OPTION A: Historical Zone (H1)- small	**OPTION B: Historical Zone (H1)- large**
Figure 1	**Figure 2**
Size: 249 ha	**Size: 624 ha**
• This site will be designated a **historical zone.** • This zone would include the land on the south side of the Miniss River, including all known pictographs. • Permitted new development **may include** : necessary signs, as well as interpretive, educational and research facilities. • The water next to this area and the park land on the north side of the river are in the proposed natural environment zone (NE).	• This site will be designated a **historical zone.** • This zone would include the land on the south side of the Miniss River (including all known pictographs), **and the land on the north side of the river. This would allow for protection of any similar but unknown cultural heritage features on the north side.** • Permitted new development **may include** : necessary signs, as well as interpretive, educational and research facilities. • The water next to this area is in the proposed natural environment zone (NE).
Notes: The only difference between these two options is size of the zone. Option B is a larger zone to accommodate possible features on the north side of the water that have not been identified. In Option A the land on the north side of the water would be included in the natural environment zone (NE). The natural environment zone on the north side of the river would allow for camping, shorelunches, recreational snowmobile travel on existing trails. There are other differences between zone types. These are shown in **Table 1 on page 19.**	



Northeast Miniss Lake Cultural Site

This area is located on the north-eastern shore of Miniss Lake and extends 200 metres inland from the lake. This is an area of traditional use by local First Nations people. Although there is currently no development, this was the site of a historic First Nation homestead. This may be a good site for future interpretive and tourism opportunities for Mishkeegogamang First Nation people. A canoe route passes through here.

OPTION A: Historical Zone (H2)	**OPTION B: Development Zone (D2)**	**OPTION C: part H2 zone and part D2 zone**
Figure 1	**Figure 2**	**Not shown on map**
Size: 80 ha	**Size: 80 ha**	**Size: 80 ha**
• This site will be designated a **historical zone.** • Permitted activities may include: hiking, educational programs and fishing from shore. • Permitted new development **may include:** hiking trails, necessary signs, and small educational facilities. • The water of Miniss Lake adjacent to this zone is in the proposed natural environment zone (NE).	• This area will be designated a **development zone.** • Permitted activities may include: hiking, interpretive/educational programs, fishing from shore, **camping** and **recreational snowmobile travel on authorized existing trails.** • Permitted new development may include: hiking trails, necessary signs, **picnic areas, campsites, commercial service facilities**, and large educational facilities. • The water of Miniss Lake adjacent to this zone is in the proposed natural environment zone (NE).	• There will be **a combination of these two zone types in this area** (e.g., camping area designated as development zone and sensitive cultural areas zoned as historical zone).
Notes: The primary difference between these options is the levelof activity and associated development permitted. The development zone allows for a higher level of services and facilities, such as camping and commercial service facilities. There are other differences between zone types. These are shown in **Table 1 on page 19.**		

Minchin Lake Recreation Area

This area is located next to Highway 599 on Minchin Lake. The area has traditionally been the location of several access points with primitive park facilities and boat launches. The safety of current access to the water is a concern. There are also several First Nation habitations in this area and campsites on the shore of Minchin Lake.

OPTION A: Development Zone (D1)	**OPTION B: Access Zone (A1)**
Figure 1	**Figure 2**
Size: 791 ha	**Size: 0.2 ha**
• This site will be designated a **development zone.** • Opportunities for parking, boat launches, car camping and natural and cultural interpretation facilities will be considered. • Recreational snowmobile travel will be permitted on authorized existing trails (see Section 3.3 – Page 16). • Due to safety concerns, no hunting will be permitted within this zone. • The water of Minchin Lake is in the proposed natural environment zone (NE).	• This site will be designated an **access zone.** • **No facility development will occur** but existing traditional access, boat launches and camping will be permitted to continue. Minor improvements to the existing boat launches and access points would be required to provide safe access. • Recreational snowmobile travel will be permitted on authorized existing trails (see Section 3.3 – Page 16). • Due to safety concerns, no hunting will be permitted within this zone. • The water of Minchin Lake is in the proposed natural environment zone (NE).
Notes: The only two differences between these options is the level of development and the type of zone. In Option B there will be no facility development, except for minor improvements to ensure public safety. In Option A, new tourism opportunities or other development may be considered (e.g., additional parking, boat launches, camping and cultural interpretation facilities). A more detailed summary of permitted activities and developments is presented in **Table 1 on page 19.**	

3.2. *Issue 2: Motorboat Use*

Currently, outboard motors are allowed in all areas of the park. Commercial boat caches and tourism facilities are found around many of the larger lakes. New commercial tourism boat caches may be considered through this park management planning process. There are no recreational boat caches currently in the park. No new recreational boat caches will be considered.

There are many things to consider when deciding if restrictions on motorboat use should be considered. These include:

- Interaction of motorboats with the natural environment (e.g., water quality or wildlife).
- Interaction of motorboats with other park users (e.g., canoeists wanting a remote experience).
- Consistency of motorboat use with the vision for the signature site (see page 1).
- Traditional use of motorboats for tourism operations (e.g., fishing) in the park.

Should there be size restrictions on boat motors?

OPTION A	OPTION B	OPTION C
• Motorboats should have one **15hp motor** (maximum). • There will be a phase-in period (e.g., 5 years). • These restrictions apply to **all boat motors** used within the park, including those used for authorized commercial resource harvesting activities.	• There **should be a horsepower restriction but it should not be 15hp.** • Please provide suggestions for the appropriate horsepower restriction.	• There should be **no** horsepower restrictions in the park.

Notes:
Smaller motors mean that boats can't travel as fast/far in a day, therefore keeping tourists closer to their base of operations and keeping some areas potentially motor-free.

Should motorboats be restricted from some areas of the park?

OPTION A	OPTION B	OPTION C
Figure 1		
• Motorboats and boat caches will not be permitted (see Figure 1): - Yam Lake, Miniss River to Lawson Lake - St. Raphael River, Miniss River, Dawson Lake to start of Miniss Lake - De Lesseps River - Miniss Lake (except for those used by clients and operators associated with the three outpost camps located on the shore of Miniss Lake). • These area restrictions **do not apply to** motorboat use and boat caches for authorized commercial resource harvesting activities.	• There should be area restrictions for motorboats but they should be **different** than the restrictions described in Option A. • Please provide suggestions for the appropriate motorboat area restrictions.	• There will be **no motorboat area** restrictions.

Notes:
Area restrictions create parts of the park that wildlife, canoeists and other park users can use and encounter few motorboats. It also limits the area of motorized operations for the tourism facilities within the park.

3.3. Issue 3: Snowmobile/ATV Use

When a management plan is approved for the park **the use of snowmobiles and ATVs will only be permitted on authorized trails (includes portages and lakes).** An authorized trail is a trail that is authorized by the Park Superintendent. There are currently no authorized recreational trails.

The use of existing motorized trails for **commercial resource harvesting** activities will be permitted to continue unless park values are threatened. Bear Management Area (BMA) trails will only be used for servicing (e.g., baiting) and not for use by clientele. No new trails will be permitted for these activities, but relocation may be permitted. One tourism operator was traditionally given authority for a winter access trail to service a facility in the park. Authorization for continued use of this trail will be considered in this park management planning process.

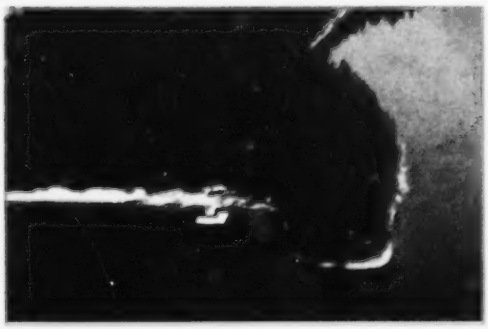
The location and number of trails currently used for **recreational** ATV and snowmobile use is unknown. The use is assumed to be minimal. Recreational ATV trails in the park are only permitted to be authorized in **development zones**. Because of the small size of proposed development zones in the park, ATV trails will not be considered for authorization. Recreational snowmobile trails can be considered for authorization in **development** and **natural environment zones**. These types of zones contain features or values which are less susceptible to disturbance than those in other zones and are able to support low to moderate intensity recreational activities.

There are many things to consider when deciding if recreational snowmobile use should be considered. These include:

- Interaction of snowmobiles with the natural environment (e.g., water quality and/or disturbance of wildlife),
- Interaction of snowmobiles with other winter users (e.g., commercial cross-country skiing operation),
- Consistency of recreational snowmobile use with the vision for the signature site (see page 1),
- Traditional recreational snowmobile use in the park.

Should recreational snowmobile use be permitted (includes both water and land trails)?

OPTION A	OPTION B
• **Consider the authorization of recreational snowmobile trails in the natural environment and/or development zones.**	• **Do not permit the authorization of recreational snowmobile trails in the park.** • This option does not allow for any snowmobile use, except for use by authorized commercial resource harvesters and Aboriginal people practicing traditional activities.



3.4. Issue 4: Tourism Activities

There are currently eight commercial tourism facilities operating in the park. Seven of these are outpost camps operating under land use permits and one is a mainbase lodge operating under a Crown land lease. There is also a mainbase lodge on a private parcel of land that is not in the park, but uses park land and resources for most of its activities. Several of the camps participate in the fall moose hunt, and two of the outpost camps hold Bear Management Area (BMA) licences. The main tourism activity in the park is sport fishing.

Access to the tourism facilities is primarily during the peak tourism season (May – September) and is largely by float plane. This traditional means of access to the facilities will be permitted to continue. The authorization of private aircraft landings will be considered in the preliminary park management plan.

Recognizing that resource-based tourism operations provide a wide variety of opportunities for visitors to discover and experience the park, existing facilities will be permitted to continue and the development of new facilities may be considered.

Tourism opportunities will provide significant direct and indirect economic benefits to local communities and the province of Ontario. Opportunities for local First Nations will be a priority in future development in the park.

Proposals for new operations must:

- Be compatible with park objectives,
- Use design and materials that reflect the natural character of the area,
- Not have negative impacts on the natural and cultural environment,
- Be consistent with the vision for the signature site (see page 1),
- Include a good business plan, and,
- Provide a fair return to the Crown.

There have been options presented in this document related to the possibility of new tourism opportunities in the park. These include a campground off of Highway 599 near Minchin Lake, a cultural tourism facility on the Northeast arm of Miniss Lake, winter tourism opportunities and non-consumptive activities.

What types of tourism activities and facilities in the park do you see as being consistent with the vision for the signature site?

- Please provide comments in the Response Booklet.

What type of restrictions should be placed on the design and materials of new facilities to reflect the natural character of the park?

- Please provide comments in the Response Booklet.

3.5. Issue 5: Park Name

There are two main reasons why a new name is being considered for the park.

1. Similar names of St. Raphael Signature Site and St. Raphael Provincial Park creates unnecessary confusion around permitted uses and policies.
2. "St. Raphael" may not fully reflect the nature of the area or its rich history (it is the name of one of a number of lakes in the park).

Should a new name be considered for the park?	
OPTION A	**OPTION B**
• The regulated name of the park should remain as St. Raphael.	• The regulated name of the park should be changed. • Name change suggestions can be provided in the Response Booklet.

Table 1: Permitted Activities and Facilities by Park Zone

ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES	Permitted Activities and Facilities by Zones Proposed for St. Raphael					
	WI	NR	NE	HI	D	A
ATVs (on authorized trails)						
Recreational	N	N	N	N	N	N
Commercial Resource Harvesters	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Aircraft landing						
Commercial	Y[1]	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Private	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Backcountry camping	Y[1]	N	Y[1]	N	Y	Y
Bait (live) possession	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]
Baitfish block operation	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Boating (power)						
Recreational	N	N	Y[1]	N	Y[1]	Y[1]
Commercial Tourism	Y[1]	N	Y[1]	M[h]	Y[1]	Y[1]
Commercial Resource Harvesters	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]
Boat caches						
Recreational	N	N	N	N	N	N
Commercial Tourism	N	N	Y[1]	M[h]	Y[1]	Y[1]
Commercial Resource Harvesters	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]
Canoeing/kayaking	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Car campgrounds	N	N	N	N	M[p]	M[p]
Fishing						
Commercial	N	N	N	N	N	N
Sport	Y	Y[1]	Y	Y	Y	Y
Commercial fur harvesting	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Commercial forest harvesting	N	N	N	N	N	N
Fire suppression	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]
Fish stocking (native species)	N	N	M[p]	N	M[p]	M[p]
Hiking/skiing/snowshoeing/dog sledding	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	Y	Y	Y
Hydro development (commercial)	N	N	N	N	N	N
Land disposition (new)						
Private	N	N	N	N	N	N
Commercial	N	N	M[p]	M[h]	M[p]	M[p]
Mineral exploration/extraction	N	N	N	N	N	N
Outfitting service facilities	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Outpost camp (commercial)						
New	N	N	M[p]	M[h]	M[p]	M[p]
Existing	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Prescribed burning	M[p]	M[p]	M[p]	N	N	N
Rock climbing and rappelling	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Shorelunch/picnic sites	Y[1]	Y[1]	Y[1]	N	Y	Y
Snowmobiling (on authorized trails)						
Recreational	N	N	M[p]	N	M[p]	M[p]
Commercial Resource Harvesters	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sport hunting (including BMAs)	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Tourism lodge (commercial)						
New	N	N	N	M[h]	M[p]	M[p]
Existing	N	N	Y	N	N	N

Legend:

Y	Permitted in designated zone
Y[1]	Subject to possible restrictions
M[p]	May be permitted in the park management plan
M[h]	May be permitted if authentic to the historical zone

4.0 Your Personal Invitation....

As someone interested in the management of St. Raphael Provincial Park, you are invited to get involved in the management planning process.

In recognition of the important natural and recreational values, the final park management plan may change the way existing user groups conduct their activities in the park. We encourage these users and other interested groups to give us their input at this stage in the planning process.

Please take a few moments to fill out the response booklet and return by **January 6th, 2006** to:

St. Raphael Signature Site Project Team
49 Prince Street, Box 309
Sioux Lookout, ON
P8T 1A6
siouxlookoutdropbox@mnr.gov.on.ca

When the public consultation period is complete, the project team will review and summarize the comments received. Following this a preliminary management plan will be prepared for the park and will include the preferred management approaches. The preliminary park management plan will be distributed for public review and comment. Based on the input received, the final park management plan for St. Raphael Provincial will be prepared, approved, and distributed.

5.0 Selected References

Frey, E. and D. Duba. 2002. St. Raphael Signature Site: Earth Science Inventory Report.

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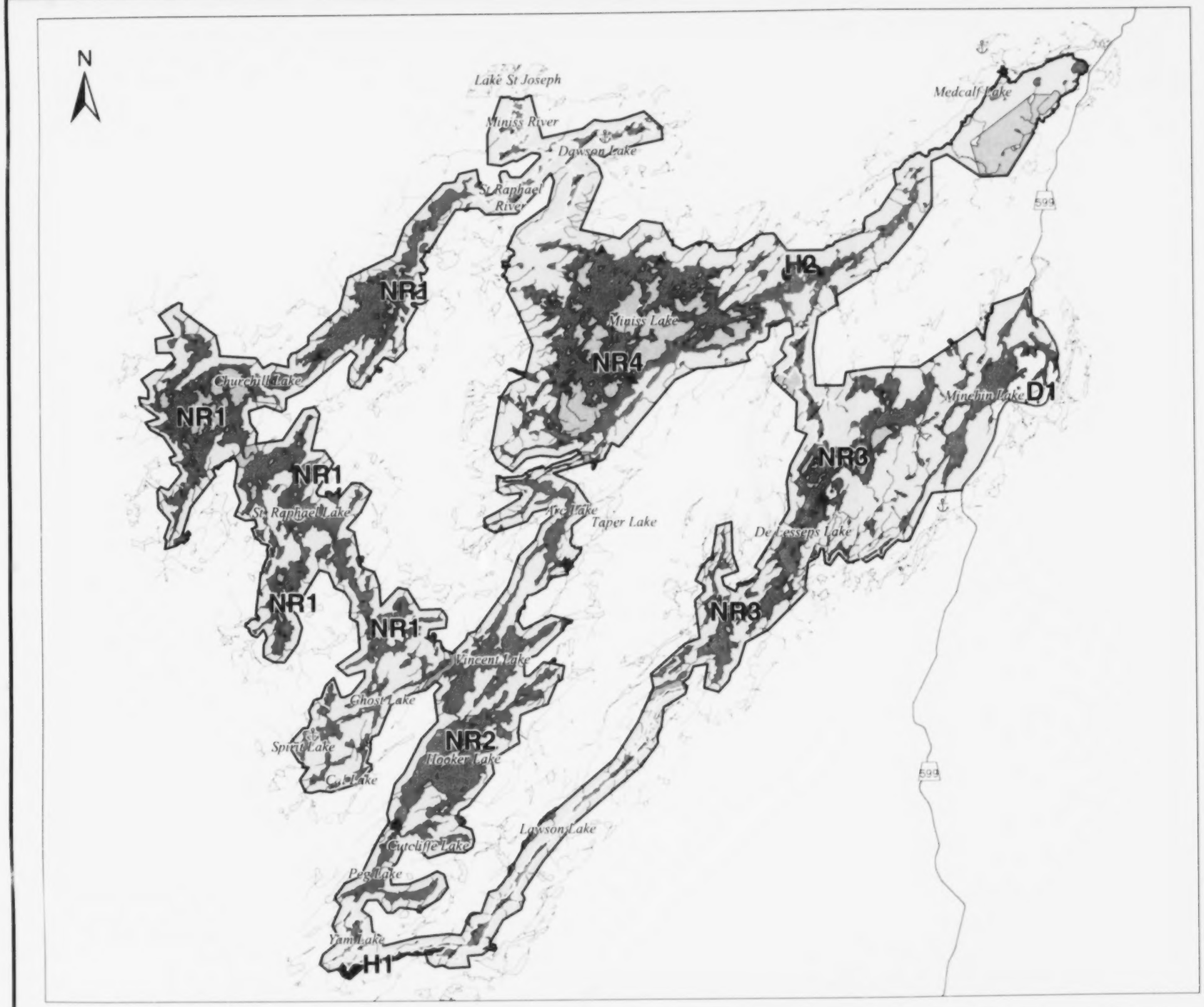
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1999. Ontario's Living Legacy: Land Use Strategy.

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1992. Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies.

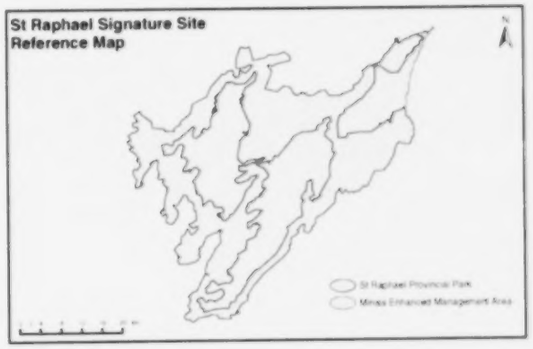
NOTE: Some of these documents and other government publications are available at:
www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/pubs/pubmenu.html
www.ontarioparks.com/english/stra_planning.html

FIGURE 1



ONTARIO PARKS

St Raphael Provincial Park



Legend

- Commercial Boat Cache
- Mainbase Lodge
- Outpost Camp
- Highway 599
- St Raphael Provincial Park

Park Zones –Option A

- Motorboat Restrictions
- Historical Zone (H#)
- Development Zone (D#)
- Access Zone (A)
- Nature Reserve (NR#)
- Natural Environment Zone (NE)
- Natural Environment Zone Water (NE)

Note:
Before reviewing this map please read pages 7-17 of the document.

- This map is one of two maps that outline park zoning.
- This map also displays proposed motorboat area restrictions.
- There are some zones on the map without labels. These are zones that have no options.
- The zones with labels beside them (e.g., NR3) have options.
- You can select some of the options from this map and some from the other map.
- Please record your selections in the Response Booklet.

Ontario

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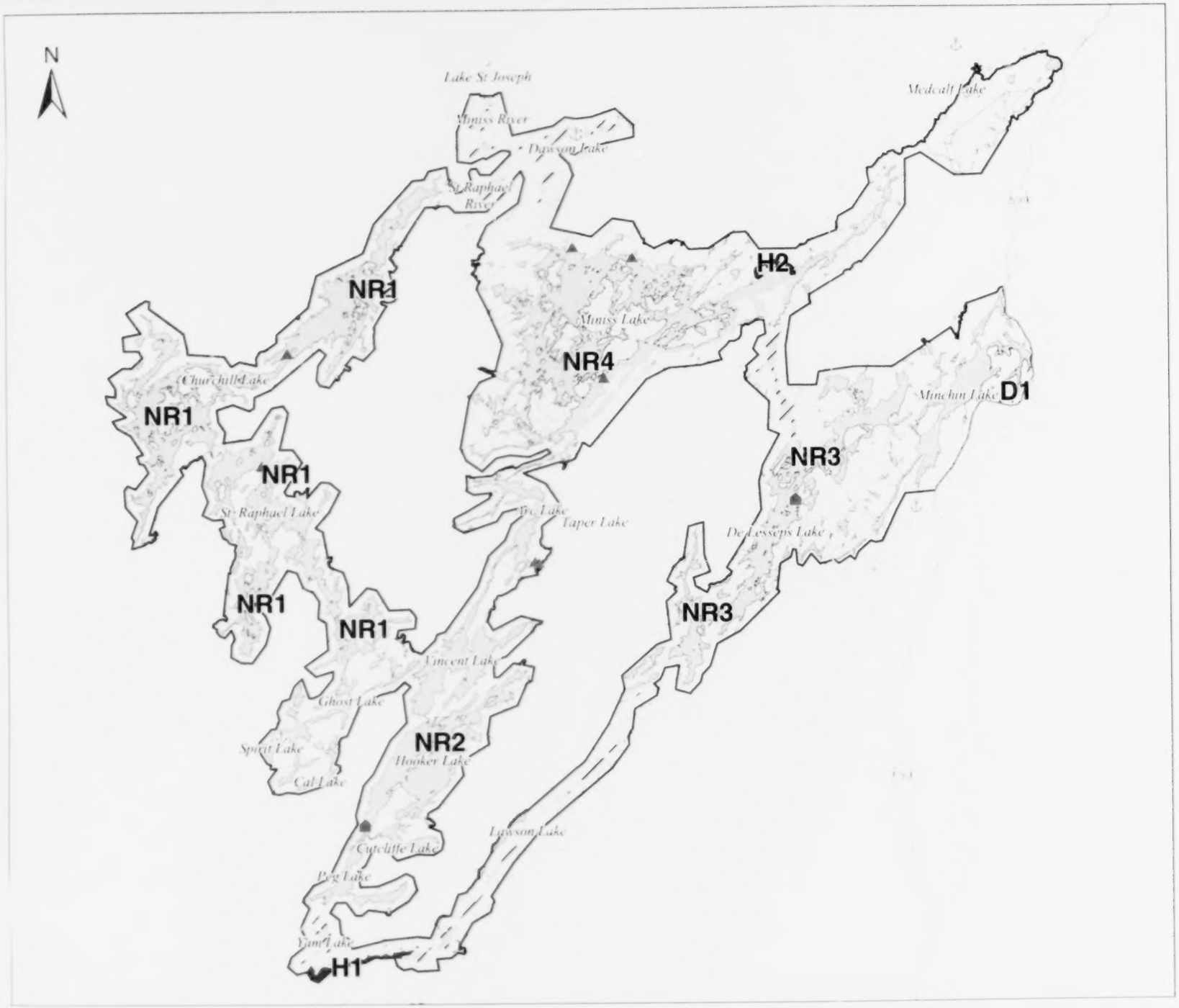
FIGURE 1



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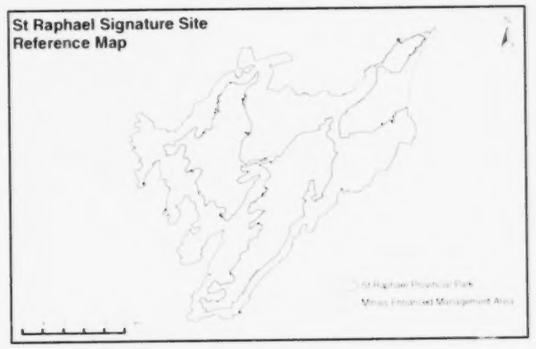
St Raphael Provincial Park



Legend

- Commercial Boat Cache
- Mainbase Lodge
- Outpost Camp
- Highway 599
- St Raphael Provincial Park

Park Zones –Option A

- Motorboat Restrictions
- Historical Zone (H#)
- Development Zone (D#)
- Access Zone (A)
- Nature Reserve (NR#)
- Natural Environment Zone (NE)
- Natural Environment Zone Water (NE)

Ontario

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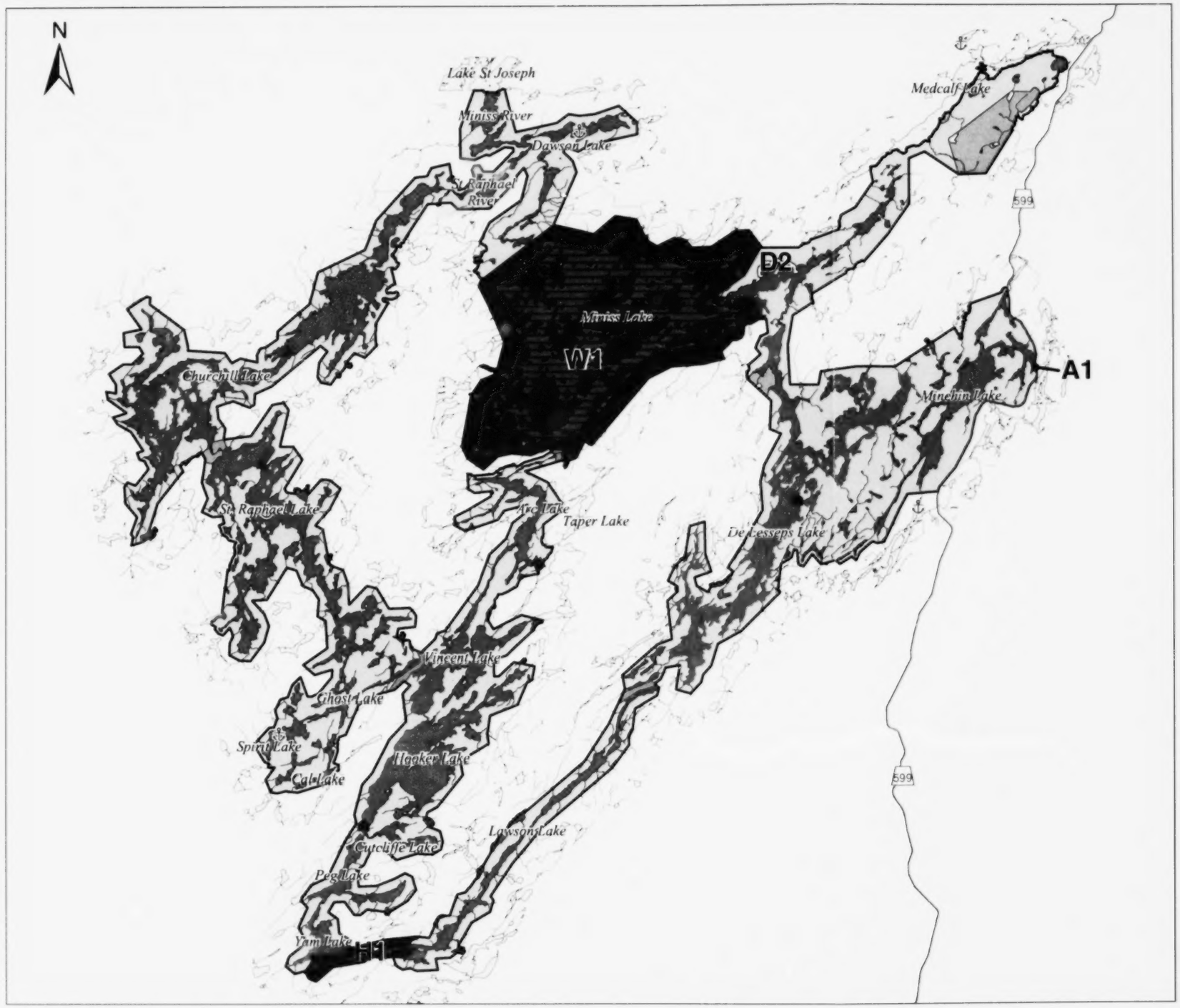
FIGURE 2



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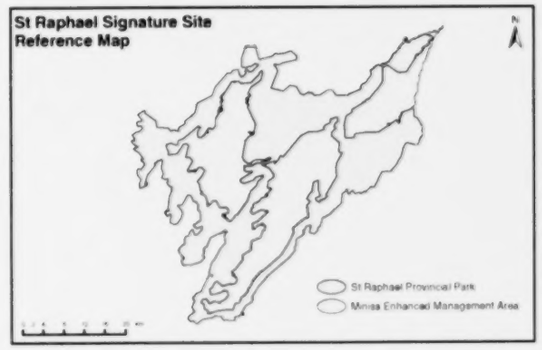
St Raphael Provincial Park



Legend

- Commercial Boat Cache
- Mainbase Lodge
- Outpost Camp
- Highway 599
- St Raphael Provincial Park

Park Zones –Option B

- Historical Zone (H#)
- Development Zone (D#)
- Access Zone (A1)
- Nature Reserve (NR#)
- Wilderness Zone (W1)
- Wilderness Zone Water (W1)
- Natural Environment Zone (NE)
- Natural Environment Zone Water (NE)

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- Please record your selections in the Response Booklet

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Projection: UTM Zone 16
Datum: NAD83
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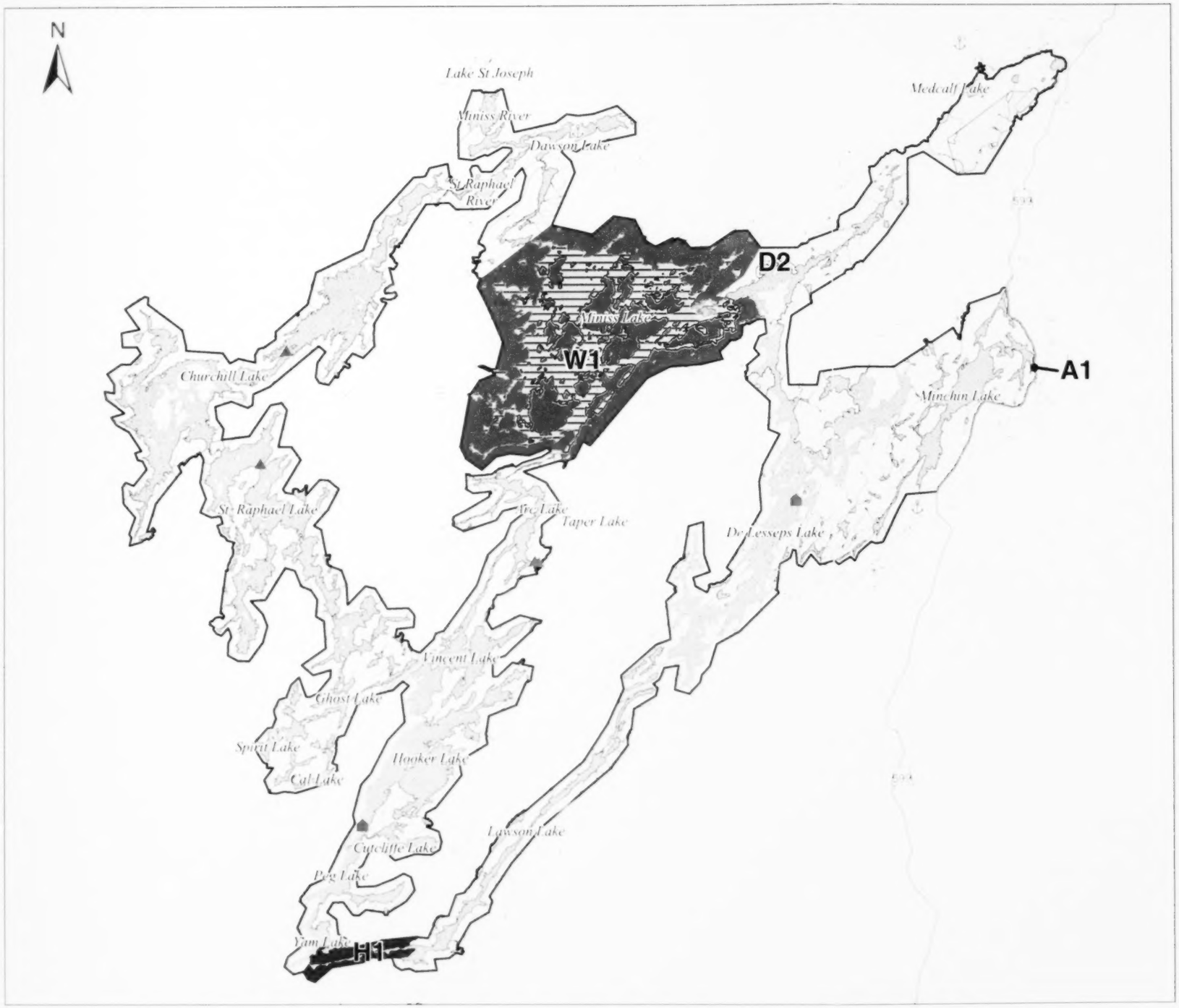
FIGURE 2



St Raphael Provincial Park

Legend

- Commercial Boat Cache
- Mainbase Lodge
- Outpost Camp
- Highway 599
- St Raphael Provincial Park

Park Zones –Option B

- Historical Zone (H#)
- Development Zone (D#)
- Access Zone (A1)
- Nature Reserve (NR#)
- Wilderness Zone (W1)
- Wilderness Zone Water (W1)
- Natural Environment Zone (NE)
- Natural Environment Zone Water (NE)

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